



Parish of St Peter & The Good Shepherd Bearsted & Harrietsham

A Member of Bearsted Area Churches Together



Newsletter

St Peter's Church, Button Lane, Bearsted, Maidstone, ME15 8NJ

Church of The Good Shepherd, Rectory Lane (off East Street), Harrietsham, ME17 1HS

Parish Priest: Father Geoffrey Pointer: 01622 736100, email: parishpriest@catholic-bearsted.org.uk

Parish Deacon: Reverend Cyril Durbin: 01622 630055

St Peter's Hall Bookings: 07919 084730

Catholic Schools in our local area:

St Francis Primary, Queen's Road, Maidstone ME16 0LB (Telephone: 771540)

The Holy Family Primary, Bicknor Road, Park Wood, Maidstone ME15 9PS (Telephone: 756778)

St Simon Stock Catholic Secondary, Oakwood Park, Maidstone ME16 0JP (Telephone: 754551)

Parish Website and YouTube:
www.catholic-bearsted.org.uk

Year B

SECOND SUNDAY of EASTER (or of *Divine Mercy*)

8th April 2018

FAITH IN FOCUS: Doubt and Disbelief The story of 'Doubting Thomas' is aimed at all those generations of people who will not see the risen Lord, yet are asked to believe. So are we really being asked to believe in what we cannot see or hear or touch, when even those closest to Jesus had problems in accepting what was happening?

In today's gospel we see Thomas struggling with a problem that many of us still struggle with today. Thomas desperately wanted to believe in the risen Jesus, but he wasn't the sort of person to pretend he understood something when he didn't. He wasn't the sort of person that could pretend that he didn't have doubts when he did. There are many of us today who desperately want deeper meaning in our lives. There are those amongst us who have become disillusioned with the Church and wish they could embrace what it once meant. There are many of us who would like to find a deeper faith but have found only stumbling blocks. Like Thomas, we find that the gap between faith and doubt too big a leap. For those who find belief elusive, there is an uncomfortable beatitude in today's gospel. "Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed." This can feel like a reproach to those of us who harbour doubts, but the important thing to remember is that doubt isn't the same thing as disbelief. Doubt can be a good thing even. Doubt means that we are still questioning something that we care about. Doubt means that we are still looking for answers that we are still learning and growing. Doubt is a tool that we can use to carve a mature faith. Belief isn't something we either have or haven't got ... belief is a process, and the end product of that process, is one's own spiritual self.



Chapel Bell

THE ANNUNCIATION *Saying Yes to Jesus: 9th April* (transferred from 25th March). At the Annunciation, Mary's consent was one of the most important moments in the history of salvation and in the unfolding of the Eucharistic mystery. We call that moment her 'fiat', the first word in a Latin phrase that means "Be it done unto me according to your word." When we say yes to God, we allow his grace to be fruitful. When we say *no*, we are missing big opportunities to be part of God's picture.

St PETER'S CHOIR PRACTICE This **Tuesday**, 8pm.

RED BOXES Would holders please bring their Missio Red Boxes in to church to be emptied. (Please remember to fill in your name on the label so we know whom to return them to.) Thank you.

CHURCH ACCOUNTS Mr Ian Fraser will be presenting the church accounts to us **next weekend**.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS The children are now preparing for their First Eucharist on **Sunday 20th May**, Pentecost Sunday.

CONFIRMATIONS If you are in year 9 or above, and would like to be confirmed, please speak to Fr Geoffrey or Deacon Cyril. Deanery confirmations are in **October**.

DIARY for the WEEK BEGINNING 8th APRIL 2018 (Masses and Devotions marked '(H)' are at Harrietsham)			
✕ SECOND SUNDAY of EASTER (or of Divine Mercy) (B) ✕			
Sun 8th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Elizabeth and Henry, wellbeing
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Michalina's birthday
Mon 9th	ANNUNCIATION of THE LORD (transferred)	7.00pm	✕ Mass
Tues 10th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass: Kathleen Mary Byrne (FM)
Wed 11th	St Stanislaus	(H) 10.00am	✕ Mass: Colin Goddard RIP
Thu 12th	Feria	7.00am	✕ Mass
Fri 13th	Feria	10.00am	✕ Mass: Holy Souls
Sat 14th	Feria	5-5.30pm	Confessions
✕ THIRD SUNDAY of EASTER (B) ✕			
Sun 15th	Saturday	6.00pm	✕ Vigil Mass: Dorothy Wittwer RIP
	Sunday	(H) 8.45am	✕ Mass: Pro Populo
		10.30am	✕ Mass: Ben Featherstone RIP
		12.30	Baptism: Emilia Bahia

SAMARA'S AID Please see the notice about the update to this local initiative in support of refugees in Syria. **Volunteers needed.**

PLEASE PRAY...

- **With the Holy Father for April** – for those who have responsibility in economic matters, that leaders in financial affairs may have the courage to reject economic measures that exclude people, and rather seek new inclusive approaches.
- **For all the sick and for all who are unwell at home or in our care homes;** especially Betty and Jim Brown and Dan Cramm; for those who have died recently especially Dorothy Wittwer, and for all those whose anniversaries occur about now (see below); for all our relatives and friends; and for the intentions on the notice board.
- **For all those taking part in the Commonwealth Games and for their supporters,** that the Games might strengthen the bonds which link the participating countries and lead to new ways of cooperation and unity in the cause of peace.
- **Anniversaries this week** (St Peter's Lady Chapel memorial): ✕ Patrick Murphy, Terence Murphy, Wallie Locke, Archibald Cram, Jack Hartigan, Benjamin Rudzinski, John Stock, Michael Tippe and Francis Iloenyasi. ✕

Thank you: the sum received on Good Friday for the Holy Places was **£215.99**. (Weekly standing orders, paid direct into our bank now amount to **£165.00**.) ♦ Fr Geoffrey is very grateful for the offerings last Sunday which amounted to slightly over **£2,000**. He also thanks people for their cards and gifts. ♦ The recent successful St Patrick's evening made a profit of **£481** for Maidstone's 'Young Lives Foundation', a small independent local charity working with young people in need of help.

MARRIAGE MASS at St GEORGE'S CATHEDRAL Saturday 16th June, 3pm. If you are celebrating a significant wedding anniversary this year, **please give in your names by the end of April** so you can receive an invitation from the Archbishop. This annual event fills the cathedral and is well received; all are welcome to attend.

CAFOD Match Funding Deadline It's not too late to donate to CAFOD's Lenten Fast Day Appeal. It's a three-month appeal. Money raised in the three months from Shrove Tuesday 13th February, to Saturday 12th May, will be match funded by the UK Government. Donations raised by 12th May must then reach Romero House by Sunday 1st July at the latest to be matched. The UK Government will match donations up to an overall total of £5 million.